

St. James' Church
Goose Creek
Berkeley County
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-79

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORIC AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of South Carolina

Historic American Buildings Survey

Prepared at Washington Office
for Southeast Unit

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS

Saint James Church
Goose Creek Vicinity
Berkeley County
South Carolina

Historical Data:

This Parish was laid off by Act of Assembly November 30, 1706, and its boundaries defined by an Act December 18, 1708. Before the establishment of the Church of England by law in this Province, the District about Goose Creek had become thickly settled. The Reverend William Corbin A.M. is the first clergyman on record who officiated in the settlement: he arrived in 1700, and left the Province in 1703.

Saint James Church is a handsome rough-cast brick edifice with four arch-sashed windows and a door on each side. The roof is supported by four Doric columns on each side and the walls are adorned with several handsome monuments. The aisles are paved with flagstone. The cherubs in stucco over each of the keystones are famous and so is the pelican feeding her young, over the west door. The British Royal Arms are still above the main entrance.

Bibliography:

Dalcho, Frederick - An Historical Account
of the Protestant Episcopal Church in
South Carolina

Lesesne, Thomas Petigru - Landmarks of
Charleston

Edgar

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ST. JAMES' CHURCH
Goose Creek, Berkeley County, South Carolina

Owner: Episcopal Church

Date of erection: 1711

Present condition: Good

Description:

Masonry plastered and painted buff pink; one high story below a jerkinhead roof. The plan is a simple rectangle with no projections. Although the west is the principal liturgical elevation, the two sides are more important architecturally as they are five bays, in contrast to the three of the west elevation. The west doorway has stucco and stone enrichments in the form of Doric pilasters and a frieze enriched with pseudo-triglyphs with flaming hearts in the metopes. Above is a pediment containing in the tympanum a pelican and her young. The eight-panel double doors are now covered with metal sheathing. Flanking the doorway are semi-circular arched-head windows ten lights high, four lights wide. These are framed by plaster architraves with cherub heads in place of keystones. The corners of the building have rusticated stucco quoins. The windows of the side elevations are identical, but the central doors are smaller and lack the modillioned enrichments; the pediments are segmental. The east end has three arched windows, the center being enlarged over the others.

The interior contains much detail of interest, including a plastered and marbleized reredos with coupled composite pilasters and broken serpentine pediment containing royal arms. On the window sill is lettered "the invitation," indicating that this was originally the retable of the altar. The present pulpit is a later inclusion. It seems probable that the wood nave arcades are subsequent to the original building and were introduced to stabilize the roof. The west gallery is eighteenth-century and has placed against it a fine hatchment of Ralph Izard.

Additional data:

The parish is the oldest Episcopal parish, outside of Charleston, in South Carolina and was established by the Church Act of 1706. The present building seems to have been built between 1711 and 1719 during the rectorate of the Reverend Francis le Jau, D.D., a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

Addendum to
St. James' Protestant Episcopal Church
(St. James' Church)
Goose Creek
Berkeley County
South Carolina

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORIC AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

SAINT JAMES' PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH
(FORMER PARISH OF SAINT JAMES)

An addendum to
Saint James' Church
Goose Creek, South Carolina
in HABS Catalog (1941)

Address: Goose Creek, Berkeley County, South Carolina (11 miles north of Charleston).

The following is based on observation of the building, June 14, 1962 and interviews with Samuel Gaillard Stoney, 129-X Tradd Street, Charleston, South Carolina, June 1962 and June 1963:

PART I. COMMENTARY ON DATA WRITTEN IN 1941

After the earthquake of 1886 unauthentic restorations were made to the building; the exterior photographs of 1940 and the description of 1941 deal with the building in that state. More recent restoration work, based upon careful study, has changed the appearance. These addenda deal with the state of the church building in 1962.

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF ALTERATIONS PRIOR TO THE MOST RECENT RESTORATION

A. Exterior

1. Walls: In 1955 an effort was made to arrest apparent deterioration of brick in the walls. At first concrete footings were inserted diagonally at the corners of the building; this proved ineffective, for cracks appeared. Then the original foundations below grade were removed and replaced by reinforced concrete footings. No further cracking has been observed.
2. Roof: The form of the roof was altered in 1876, to facilitate slating; old timbers of the frame show that these changes were made.
3. Shutters: In 1876 metal-clad shutters were placed over the windows, and the doors were sheathed with metal, as safeguards against fire.
4. Earthquake damage: Extensive damage was done by the earthquake of 1886, whose epicentrum was very near. At this time the western gable collapsed.
5. Ornamental stucco: In 1907 cherubim crowning some of the windows were replaced, and a pelican-in-piety

over the west doorway was replaced. (Note: the cherub over the east window of the chancel is original; all of the others appear to have been lost before, or by the time of, the earthquake. Two that had been carried off by souvenir hunters were recovered and placed over the western windows; the one over the south window of the west wall survives but the other decayed and was replaced. Cherubim over the other windows are either casts made from the recovered figures or those placed there in 1907).

B. Interior

1. Tie rods: Iron tie rods were inserted just above the side aisle ceiling in 1844 to brace the side walls.
2. Chancel furnishings: The design and material of the pulpit and reading desk indicate it to be a late 18th-century or early 19th-century replacement. The communion rail is evidently an addition, possibly from 1876.

- C. Site: Until 1931 the church was divided from the surrounding forest of its glebe only by a ditch and bank. The present brick wall and wrought iron gate were built then, the gate following a contemporary (early 19th century) model in Croydon, England.

PART III. DESCRIPTION OF RECENT RESTORATION WORK

- A. Western Facade: After the successful replacement of foundations in 1955 the walls were repaired and the decorations of the facade were restored, following the oldest known picture of the church, a water color made by Charles Fraser c. 1800. This work followed the designs of Samuel G. Stoney, and was carried out under his direction.

The Roman Doric pilasters were surmounted by an entablature and pediment. In the frieze above the pilasters are conventional triglyphs, between them five flaming hearts, retained from the old facade of 1886. In the tympanum a pelican-in-piety, feeding her hungry young with her own flesh and blood, a symbol of the sacrament, modeled more closely to the conventional form, replaced the one set up in 1907. Metal sheathing was removed from the doors, but retained on the shutters. The cymatium was carried across the face of the building to meet the eaves, as shown on Fraser's sketch.

- B. Eastern Facade: At the same time the east gable had a cornice restored, missing from the time of the earthquake.
- C. Exterior Generally: The exterior was painted a light red with white enrichments.

PART IV. TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING, FROM OBSERVATION

A. Exterior

- 1. Over-all dimensions: About 40' x 50'; one story; facing west.
- 2. Foundations: The lower portion of the walls, about 3', projects somewhat, with a water table.
- 3. Wall construction: Walls are about 19" thick, of soft brick, stuccoed on the exterior and plastered on the interior.
- 4. Wall composition: The north and south sides are similar, having central entrance doors and two arched windows on either side. The west front has a central entrance and one window on each side. The east end has three windows, the central one larger than the others. Quoins enhance the corners.
- 5. Openings:

- a. Doorways: The main door in the western facade is framed by pilasters with entasis, carrying an entablature and pediment, in the Roman Doric style. The frieze and bed molds of the cornice break out over the pilasters; there is a single triglyph over each pilaster. In the frieze between are five flaming hearts. The crowning cymatium of the pediment extends across the face of the building to the side cornices. In the tympanum is a pelican-in-piety, a symbol both of the maternal love of the Church and of the Eucharist. The door has two leaves, five panels in each.

The north and south doorways are similar to each other, having modified Roman Doric pilasters, simplified entablatures and segmental pediments. Each door has two panels with bolection moldings.

- b. Windows: Openings are semicircular-arched and trimmed on the exterior with a stucco architrave,

without impost. At the crown of each is a cherub in relief. Sash are double hung, 12 lights over 12 lights, with a stilted fanlight above. There are simple paneled shutters, covered on the outside with tin.

6. Roof: The roof form is that of a hipped gable, covered with slate. There is a small stucco cornice.

B. Interior

1. Plan: The building is rectangular, divided by colonnades into three aisles. There is a gallery at the west end, over an open narthex, reached by means of a small stair in the northeast corner. A pulpit is centered at the east end. (Note: the colonnades and gallery are original features).
2. Nave colonnades: Each consists of three bays. Columns are of solid pine, round and tapered; capitals consist simply of an abacus. Those at the ends are half-columns. Over each bay is a wooden pseudo arch of segmental outline with keyblock. These pseudo arcades carry a blind clerestory about 4'-6" in height, behind which is a (concealed) lattice truss over each colonnade. A vertical block over each column extends through the height of the clerestory.
3. Gallery: The wooden gallery rests on four Ionic columns and two Ionic pilasters, with a rather wide entablature, above which is paneling in the form of a classical attic.
4. Reredos: The reredos is most notable for its monumental scale, unusual for its time in the United States. Framing the chancel window are the halves of a Baroque tabernacle in the Composite order. The halves consist of coupled pilasters standing on a low pedestal course, carrying the halves of a broken swansneck pediment. Above the window, in the round, are the arms of George I--the only known example of such insignia surviving in an American Colonial church from Pre-Revolutionary times. At the key-point of the window's archivolt is a Bible supported by two cherubim. On the archivolt and below the window sill are texts in raised letters. The monumental effect of these decorations was impaired by tablets containing the Creed, Lord's Prayer and Commandments, placed over the pilasters in 1758. The decorations are stucco, except for florets in the cornice between modillions, which are of metal. The details of the reredos are colored and marbled.

SAINT JAMES' PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH
(Former Parish of Saint James)
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5. Pulpit: The reading desk and pulpit comprises an elevated feature, reached by a curving stair; a hexagonal sounding board is suspended above. Its style and structure (cypress painted to imitate mahogany) indicate the last decade of the 19th century as a probable date.
6. Ceiling: The plaster ceiling is flat, the portion over the nave being higher than that over the side aisles. There is no cornice.
7. Pews: There are four rows of paneled box pews.
8. Flooring: The floor is covered with flagging. (Wooden floors evidently placed in the pews about 1844 decayed and became termite-infested, and were removed in 1949.)
9. Vestry: A vestry room under the stair which leads to the gallery was probably enclosed in 1844.

PART V. HISTORICAL NOTE

This church represents the earliest Anglican congregation (not parish) outside Charleston, in this colony. The present building replaced an earlier one of record. According to the correspondence of the Reverend Dr. Francis Le Jau, rector of the Parish when the church was begun, it was in building by 1708. It was completed in 1719.

PART VI. REFERENCES

Charles Fraser, A Charleston Sketchbook (Charleston, S.C.: Carolina Art Association, 1940). Page 10 contains a sketch of this church.

Samuel Gaillard Stoney, Plantations of the Carolina Low Country, Revised ed. (Charleston, S.C.: Carolina Art Association, 1955).

Frederick Dalcho, M. D., An Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina (Charleston: 1820).

Joseph Ioor Waring, St. James Church Goose Creek, S. C., a Sketch of the Parish from 1706 to 1909 (Charleston: 1909).

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ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS